

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MELANIE TAYLOR, DEDICATED SPANISH TEACHER OF COMAL ISD

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Melanie Taylor for her outstanding contributions to education in the Comal Independent School District of Texas.

Ms. Taylor earned her Bachelor's degree in music from Texas State University in San Marcos. But having fallen in love with the Spanish language and culture at an early age, Melanie Taylor began teaching elementary Spanish in Mexico. Ever since then, Melanie has passed on her passion for Spanish and her appreciation of the Hispanic culture to every student she teaches.

Melanie Taylor has been teaching for 18 years and is now a Spanish teacher for seventh and eighth-graders at the Spring Branch Middle School in Comal ISD. She loves the "middle school attitude," and understands how to connect with her students during their crucial preteen years.

Melanie Taylor summarizes her teaching philosophy this way: "I work hard to teach them [students] not to settle for mediocrity and I try to lead them to become caring and kind individuals who will treat each other with respect and dignity. I try to be a good listener and to help them look for the best solutions to their problems using strong moral values." She has also been dedicated to helping Hispanic students gain a greater sense of pride in their heritage, and their roots. In her efforts, she has helped students understand the advantage and necessity of being multilingual in an increasingly competitive world.

Besides teaching Spanish, Taylor also is the sponsor of Spring Branch Middle School's Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA). Through FCA, she and more than 100 student leaders plan socials and conduct community service projects. For her many achievements as an educator, Taylor received the Comal ISD's 2004 KENS5 TV Station ExCEL Teacher of the Year Award.

I am honored to have had the opportunity to recognize such a dedicated teacher and community leader in Comal ISD.

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF MERLIN ROSEMEIER

HON. MARK R. KENNEDY

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer condolences to the family and friends of Merlin Rosemeier, who passed away April 10, 2005. Merlin was a close family friend and served as best man in my father's wedding. He is survived by his wife, Ramona, nine children, 26 grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and one sister.

Merlin was born in Dublin Township in 1928. He attended school in Murdock and at the University of Minnesota. He married Ramona

Traxler on August 29, 1953, and settled into the family farm. He was a hard working dairy farmer and in 2002, his family celebrated owning a century farm.

He was also a very faithful man. As a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, he served as the choir director and I fondly remember him using his deep, rich voice to sing "Ave Maria," at church services. He said Grace before every meal and always added a Hail Mary for the crops.

Mr. Speaker, Merlin was a family man whose positive, friendly spirit resonated to those around him. Nothing ever broke his kind and gentle soul. He will be dearly missed by all those that knew and loved him and his memory will live on in their hearts.

IN HONOR OF LAUREL MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to the Laurel Middle School located in Laurel, Delaware. Founded in 1683, Laurel is a small town in southwestern Delaware that is home to over 800 buildings listed on the National Historic Record. Named for the trees that run along the town's Broad Creek, Laurel is now home to over 3,800 Delawareans. In addition to many historic buildings and beautiful recreation areas, the town is also home to a public school that has proven itself as one of the best in the United States: Laurel Middle School.

I would like to personally thank Dawn Williams, a 7th grade science teacher at Laurel Middle School. Ms. Williams has made me aware of the strides taken by the school. As a benchmark for public education in Delaware, Laurel Middle School has been recognized with a Delaware State Testing Program rating of "superior." This recognition was made possible through the hard work of students, teachers and school officials. While it was the students who scored exceptionally on the test, it is the support system, led by Principal Julie Bradley along with parents, teachers, and administrators, who make it possible to achieve a superior rating.

Most notably, this achievement occurred in a poverty area school, showing that hard work and strong community support can yield outstanding results, regardless of income level. I am grateful for the work of everyone involved and am excited to see the youth of Laurel grow up to become the leaders of tomorrow. Once again Mr. Speaker, I commend the efforts of Laurel Middle School and look forward to following their future achievements.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INGHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary

of the dedication of the Ingham County Courthouse. Construction of the courthouse began in April 1902 and the cornerstone was laid May 5, 1903. The original structure was finally completed in late 1904 at a cost of \$96,678.00 and was dedicated on May 9, 1905. In 1971, the courthouse was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Ingham County Courthouse is a monument to the mechanical and architectural knowhow of the people of Michigan. Designed by a Lansing architect and constructed by Michigan contractors, the century-old Ingham County Courthouse stands tall as a testament to quality of Michigan workmanship.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's historic places are a vital link to our past and mark the progress of our Nation. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the importance of these historic buildings and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Ingham County Courthouse.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MARY LOU FRENCH, INGHAM COUNTY COMMUNITY NEWS 2005 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 28, 2005

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the accomplishments of Mary Lou French, the Ingham County, Michigan Community News 2005 Volunteer of the Year. Mary Lou French retired as a teacher, but still teaches about 700 school children every year about life on a farm. Mary Lou, who has maintained her active community involvement even into retirement, is best described in an article in the Ingham County Community News, written by Editor Rachel S. Greco:

MASON, MI—She isn't at the head of a classroom anymore but Mary Lou French, retired after 28 years with Mason schools, still finds solace when teaching.

At her 40-acre farm, French plays hostess to nearly 700 school children from Ingham County every fall. They take a trip there to learn a first-hand lesson in farm life. The pre-school through second grade groups are introduced to pumpkins, animals and hayrides.

"I had a hard time leaving teaching," said French, of her decision to invite students to her property. "It's just another way I get back to teaching."

In truth, French has been just as active in the community in retirement as she was before it. Her volunteer efforts are evident at the First Presbyterian Church of Mason—where she serves as a Women's Association leader and helps to organize various events and dinners.

But those efforts also extend out into the community, where French has served on the Mason Relay for Life committee since the event's local start, and in the schools where she volunteers to tutor young students in reading and writing.

All this activity is the sum of French's retirement, and she wouldn't have it any other way.

"I've been gone from home all my life," she explained. "I don't like staying at home so this fills the time."

This year, French will become the sixth recipient of the Agnes Comer Volunteer of the Year award, given annually by the staff of the Ingham County Community News.